

REMARKS

The Examiner has required an election from among fourteen species, as represented by the Figures in the application which are related to fourteen embodiments of the present invention. The Applicants respectfully traverse this restriction.

The Applicants submit that the restriction between the species is improper. All of the groups of claims relate to an apparatus for transporting plate-shaped work pieces. The independent claims of the application are claims 1 and 23. Independent claim 1 recites an apparatus comprising a frame, an air-supplying-type support means that supplies air toward the work piece, a dust-removal filter, and an air-supplying means. Independent claim 23 recites an apparatus comprising a frame, a motor, a fan, a dust-removal filter, a plate-shaped porous member, and a circulation aperture.

While the Figures of the application demonstrate a number of different configurations, each of the depicted configurations is encompassed within the language of the claims generically defining an apparatus for transporting plate-shaped work pieces. Furthermore, the Applicants submit that a search with respect to the various embodiments of the present invention would not pose an undue burden on the Examiner. For the above reasons, the Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the restriction requirement.

In any event, the Applicants elect species III as represented by Figs. 15 and 16 and claims 1-3, 5, 10, 14-19, and 21-25, with traverse. Furthermore, the Applicants submit that claim 1 is generic to all embodiments (i.e., to all species defined by the Examiner).

The Detailed Description of the Invention states that "Several embodiments are described...but features disclosed in the [sic] each of the embodiments are not limited to use in only that embodiment, and as long as there are no contradictions, these features can be suitably applied to other embodiments as well". The Applicants submit that potentially all claims are relevant to each of the species.

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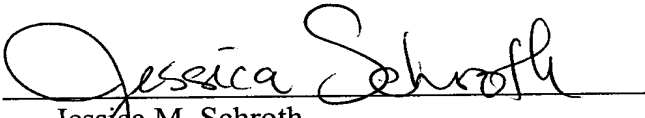
The Examiner indicated that Figs. 17 and 18 are directed to different species, and likewise for Figs. 19 and 20, and Figs. 25 and 26. However, the Applicants point out that Figs. 17 and 18 are actually different views of the same apparatus and, thus, would belong to the same species. The same goes for Figs. 19 and 20 and for Figs. 25 and 26.

The Examiner was silent regarding in which species Fig. 14 would belong. The Applicants believe that Fig. 14 would belong to species II, as defined by the Examiner.

Examination and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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